

# The Advocate

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## INTERESTING TESTIMONY.

Verbatim Extracts from the Testimony of Jay Gould and Others, as Reported in Document Number 98, of 1873, of the Assembly of the State of New York, Taken Before the Select Committee Appointed by the Assembly March 11, 1873, to Investigate Alleged Mismanagement on the Part of the Erie Railway Company.

FIFTH AVENUE HOTEL, NEW YORK }  
Friday, March 21, 1873. }

Committee met, pursuant to adjournment. Present: Hon. Messrs. Babcock, Lincoln, Wright, Crary, Carpenter, (p. 28.) Jay Gould being duly sworn, testified as follows:

Question. Your present residence is what?

Answer. 578 Fifth Avenue (p. 50.)

Q. You were, at one time, president of the Erie Railway Company?

A. Yes, sir. (p. 50.)

Q. When were you elected president of the Erie Railway Company?

A. In 1868. (p. 545.)

Q. At what time did you cease to be such president?

A. On the 12th of March, 1872.

Q. Have you at present any connection with the Erie Railway Company?

A. No, sir. (p. 50.)

Q. What contributions did you make for elections in 1860, 1870, 1871 and 1872, to the Senatorial and assembly districts?

A. I cannot tell. I gave a large amount, but it has passed out of my mind. I remember sending a large amount to Sullivan and Orange for the election of Senator. It was several thousand dollars. It was what they said would be necessary to carry the day, in addition to the amount forwarded by the committee. The nominations had not been made when I made the arrangement. I think I contributed a large amount of it through Senator Madden. I don't remember the amount. (p. 551.)

Q. Can you tell me to what other districts you contributed money?

A. I must have contributed more or less to all on the line of the road. I cannot say the amount contributed. I have no opinion about it. When I get through a campaign I banish it. We had to look after four states, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio, and have helped men in all of them.

It was the custom when men received nominations to come to me for contributions, and I made them and considered them good, paying investments for the company.

In a Republican district I was a strong Republican. In a Democratic district I was Democratic; and in a doubtful district I was doubtful. In politics I was

an Erie railroad man every time. (p. 551, 552.)

Q. If you were given a list of the Senators and Assemblymen of 1870, 1871 and 1872, could you point out the names of men you assisted?

A. I could not tell. Some men I would help and they not know it; it would make enemies of them if they knew it. (p. 552.)

Q. You spoke of sending sums to Clinton county, and I think other counties. Can you tell us who you gave these sums to?

A. I don't remember; I remember sending at one time five thousand dollars to Clinton county. (p. 552.)

Q. Do you remember sending sums to other counties—particular sums?

A. Yes, sir, but the details of them I have not got.

Q. Do you remember who you sent them to?

A. Now that you speak of it, I remember sending five thousand dollars, I think, to the Republican committee up there, in the interest of Senator Wood's predecessor, Humphrey. Humphrey's time had expired and the committee came down—the committee having charge of the Republican organization there—and I gave five thousand dollars to be used for the purpose of securing his nomination.

Q. Was he nominated?

A. No, sir, he failed; Senator Wood was nominated in his stead.

Q. But you do not mean to say that the Republican committee would use money as between Republicans, do you?

A. I don't know how that was.

Q. That is not usual, is it, as between Republicans?

A. As I understand it there are two candidates and one of them can "plank up" pretty well and the other cannot. He is most likely to get the nomination, and if he can go to the convention with these assurances, or his friends can have them, why it is a pretty good ticket of admission.

Q. Yes; well, do you mean to say that you "planked up" for him before the convention that nominated him?

A. Yes, sir; before the convention.

Q. Will you look at the receipts now shown you (handing paper to witness) and state whose signature that is to it?

A. Mine, sir.

Q. And the words, "Senator Humphrey's election" are in your own handwriting, are they not?

A. Yes, sir.

Receipt read as follows:

"New York, October 9, 1869.  
"Received of the treasurer of the Erie

Railway Company \$5,000, on account of Senator Humphrey's election.

"JAY GOULD."

Q. The \$5,000 mentioned in this voucher was given to a Republican organization in the county to secure Senator Humphrey's nomination?

A. Yes, sir; which he did not secure.

Q. He did not get the nomination?

A. No, sir.

Q. General Wood did?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And then you lent him money?

A. I lent him some money, \$5,000, at one time. (p. 560.)

Q. Can you give the committee this morning an estimate of the amount—of the aggregated amount—which you were in the habit of contributing in a single year for the control of the "friendly interest" of these Senatorial and Assembly districts?

A. No, sir—I cannot fix any particular amount.

Q. I do not ask at this time for details, but for the aggregate, according to your judgment?

A. It was a large amount; but to give any definite estimate I could not. I never kept any account of it particularly.

Q. Did you pay any of the amounts to Senators in person, or to Assemblymen that were candidates; or did you pay by check?

A. I made large contributions, personally, out of my own funds.

Q. I understand that. But did you pay to the Senator or to the Assemblyman in person—I mean where it did not go through the hands of the committee?

A. Well, where I did not know the committee I would give it to the member if I happened to know him.

Q. We would like to get these in detail as much as possible if you could remember any of these details?

A. I should be very happy to afford you all the information I possess, but this occurred a long period ago; and I had relations in other states, and I did not keep separate what I paid out in New Jersey from what I paid out in New York. We had the same ground to go over there. And there has been so much of it—it has been so extensive that I have no details now to refresh my mind. When I went over a transaction and completed it that was the end of it, and I went at something else. You might as well go back and ask me how many cars of freight were moved in a particular day, and whether the trains were on time or late. I could not charge my mind with details. I can only tell you what my general rule was—my general rule of action.

Q. You state that these contributions were large?

A. Yes.

Q. In every year?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. You say that candidates were in the habit of coming to you and soliciting?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. From this state and other states?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And this was especially the case of candidates on the line of your roads?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. How did you regard these men after they were elected—as having a sort of moneyed interest in them? As president of your road how did you regard them?

A. Well, sir, I reserved my opinion until afterward. (pp. 559-567.)

Q. I understand you to say that those large contributions you made in almost every district in the state, in the years 1869-70-71, and which you gave for the carrying of elections in the districts you paid in those years?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. For the purpose of having friendly representatives in Albany?

A. Yes, sir; I paid in 1872, also, 1873, was the year of the presidential election. I paid that personally.

Q. You were not then president of the Erie railroad?

A. No, sir, I refer to the personal contributions.

As to Senator William M. Tweed's connection with Jay Gould's Erie career, he testified:

Q. Did not he (Senator William M. Tweed) go into the direction in the fall of 1868?

A. Yes, I think it was in the summer of 1868 that he went in the direction. (p. 567.)

Q. You have already been examined as to certain vouchers for moneys paid to William M. Tweed and others which were kept in the cash drawer and entered on the 11th of March, 1872; have you recollection at all of these amounts?

A. No, sir.

Q. There was one of \$75,000 to Mr. William M. Tweed; another of \$35,000 to Mr. William M. Tweed, and another of \$31,000 to Mr. William M. Tweed. Mr. Wright testified that you directed the payment of these moneys yourself; will you say that this statement is not true?

A. No, sir. (p. 559.)

Gould swears Senator Wm. M. Tweed was at first a Vanderbilt man and then a Gould man.

Q. Up to the time of the beginning of your payments to Mr. Tweed as they appear in the Erie Railway company's